

The Horned Lark

613 Tamerisk, Junction City, KS 66441-3359

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From The Keyboard -

It's been a wonderful fall! Great weather, it started raining again, not too cold but cold enough to get some birds moving. And then there was the KOS Fall Meeting in Meade. What a fantastic time! I've always had a great deal of respect for Jim Rising, and then to actually meet him and visit with him. I've always said that it took somebody who grew up in the Great Plains to really appreciate sparrows and do them justice. Tom and Audrey Flowers and the entire Meade community made KOS feel right at home. It was wonderful to see the support of the Meade County Economic Development office and have those fine folks with us for the meetings and the banquet. It's hard to beat small town hospitality. Thanks Tom and Audrey!

The Christmas Bird Count season is just around the corner. Bird counts are always a magical time. The camaraderie, the birds, the thrill of the chase, the excitement of the competition, freezing your binoculars off. You just can't beat it. I have over 50 counts listed, starting on page 12. If you've never done a Christmas Bird Count, find one close and get involved. If you are a regular at a count, add a second or third count just for fun! It's citizen science in action, you can wrap up your 2002 list with a bang or maybe start your 2003 list out right. You might even learn some new places to go birding as well. But mainly it's about the friendships.

Birding spouse Jaye and I had the opportunity to spend a Sunday morning birding with friends recently. We'd birded Morton County with these same folks in September. We'd birded Meade County with them in October. And we had another chance to bird with them., so we did. We had a blast! We were working on increasing our county list for that county. We managed to add a species or two we had missed earlier in the year. It was a breezy, cool morning.... no, it was a COLD morning! But nobody cared. We were with friends and we were seeing birds and we were enjoying the morning.

We all have different reasons for why we are attracted to birdwatching. What attracted me to begin with was the birds. That started when I was 4. Now, over 40 years later, I'm still doing it, in part, because of the people. The friends, the camaraderie the excitement of the chase and the thrill of adding that next bird to your county, state, year or life list. It's those simple things that cause me to reflect and be thankful during this holiday season.

To one and all of you, Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Chuck

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Upcoming Meeting Locations

Please note the upcoming tentative spring and fall meeting locations. Mark your calendars, look for more information in coming issues and plan to attend!

Spring 2003 - Leavenworth Co

Fall 2003 - Southwestern College, Cowley Co.

Spring 2004 - Washington Co.

Fall 2004 - Baker University, Douglas County

Spring 2004 and Beyond - Volunteers and locations needed!

Start thinking of where you'd like to go, or if you would be willing to host a spring or fall meeting. Spring meetings simply need some good bird watching areas as well as sleeping and eating establishments. Fall meetings require some place to hold meetings of around 75 to 100 people plus a location for a banquet. Contact any of the officers or board members if you have an invitation or idea for an upcoming meeting.

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KOS Items Available

If you would like to purchase KOS T-shirts, sweatshirts, window stickers, etc. then you need to contact the KOS Business Manager, Dave Williams, at 2708 South 23rd, Leavenworth, KS 66048 (913) 772-0077, or via e-mail at DaveWmsKS@aol.com

Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend in Great Bend

KOS will be one of the sponsors of the 2003 Wings 'N Wetlands Weekend, April 25 - 27, 2003. This is the 3rd year for this growing event and every indication is that this event will just get bigger. What we need from the membership is bodies! There are many different roles that volunteers can perform, but we need to know if you are interested and available. Please contact the editor, Chuck Otte, or Mike Rader, mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595 if you are willing to help! Look for more information on this event in the March *Horned Lark*.

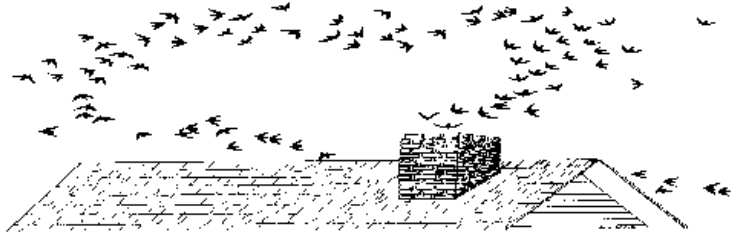
Bird Identification Class

Butler County Community College of Andover will be offering Bird Identification Seminar, a beginning birding class, during the spring semester. This course is an introduction to the identification, ecology and behavior of birds species found in south-central Kansas. The course consists of lectures, study exercises and several local field trips. This class meets on Saturdays, from 9:00 'till Noon. There will be an associated Lab-Seminar, enrollment in just mentioned class required, that will cover identification, ecology and behavior of common waterfowl and shorebirds found along the Texas coast. Most course work will occur during a field trip to the Corpus Christi, Texas area over spring break. Persons interested in these courses should contact Bob Broyles at (316) 323-6974, or at bbroyles@butlercc.edu

Time To Pay Your 2003 Membership Dues

Annual KOS membership dues are payable January 1st of each year. A form to facilitate this activity is on Page 20. Please help save the Society postage fees and send in your dues without us sending you a special mailing. **IMPORTANT:** At the bottom of the form on page 20 there is a place to indicate if you want to be included in the 2003 Membership Directory. We respect your privacy and we will not include any information in the directory that you don't want printed. KOS Membership Directories are only sent to KOS members, they are not given to the general public and the directory is not published electronically. Even if you have paid your 2003 dues already or if you are a life member, we would like to know your wishes. If we don't hear from you, your information will be published!

North American Chimney Swift Nest Site Research Project



At the fall KOS meeting, Calvin Cink gave a wonderful presentation on Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) and their conservation and population management (see Presented Papers Abstracts, page 17). In the first half of the 20th century, Chimney Swifts were rarely seen west of the Mississippi River. As forests were cleared for agriculture and development, the swifts quickly adapted to the dark shafts of chimneys, smokestacks and air shafts in lieu of their ancestral hollow tree nest and roost sites. Today their range extends from the east coast to the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

Chimney Swift numbers have been declining since the mid 1980's. As usual, the problem is due to loss of habitat. Many of the old structures which historically provided nest and roost sites have been demolished. Many homeowners with suitable clay tile or masonry chimneys have excluded the swifts with screens or caps. Most new chimneys are constructed of metal and are unsuitable because they are too slick for the swifts to cling to or to attach their tiny nests.

However, because Chimney Swifts are so well adapted to man-made structures, it is possible to create new nesting habitat specifically for swifts. In 1915 Althea Sherman demonstrated their adaptability with her "Chimney Swift Tower". Her observations and notes have been utilized and modified Chimney Swift Nest Towers (see graphic to the right) are now being constructed. In his presentation, Calvin showed pictures of the nest tower that he constructed in his backyard. He indicates that after it was erected, swifts made almost immediate use of it.

The Driftwood Wildlife Association, as well as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department have been working to raise public awareness about Chimney Swifts and these nest towers. They have developed information about building your own tower and becoming a research associate for the Nest Site Research Project.

To become a volunteer research associate or to request an information packet about the project, you can e-mail the Driftwood Wildlife Association at DWA@concentric.net.

For a free information packet about the North American Chimney Swift Nest Site Research Project, including more detailed tower plans, send a self-addressed, stamped (60 cents) legal-sized envelope to:

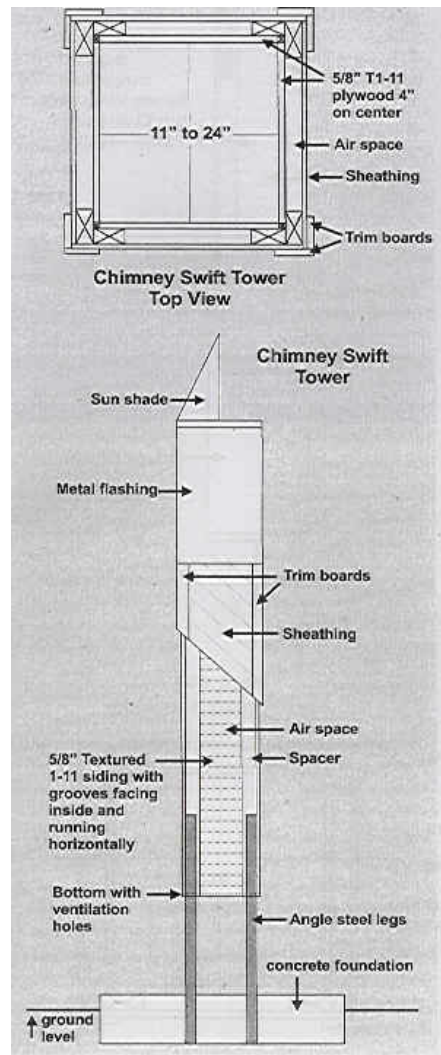
DRIFTWOOD WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION
1206 WEST 38TH, SUITE 1105
AUSTIN, TX 78705

There are also numerous web sites with much more information about Chimney Swifts and nest towers:

<http://www.gwf.org/chimneytower.htm>

<http://www.concentric.net/~Dwa/page6.html>

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/chimneyswift/chimneyswift-index.htm>



Focusing Your Birding

by *John Rakestraw*

Any opportunity to be out in the field holds the possibility for some great birding. But if we go out without a plan, just hoping for good birds, we often miss out on much of a trip's potential. If we instead approach each trip with a focus, a plan of attack, we greatly improve our success in the field.

What are some areas of focus that we might apply to a birding trip? We might want to explore a particular site, looking for as many species as possible. We might be interested in seeking a certain group of birds or even a single species. We might be trying to find a specific bird that has been previously reported by others. Occasionally, circumstances will provide a focus for you. If you are on a boat, twenty miles off shore, you are basically forced to focus on seabirds. You could hope for a lost warbler to land on the deck railing, but you will probably be disappointed. Likewise, if you are stuck in the house, you should probably concentrate on the plumage details and behavior of the common birds at your feeder. This is a valuable learning activity, and a much better use of your feeder-watching time than just waiting for a vagrant to stop in for some sunflower seeds.

SHARPEST FOCUS: Chasing a Stakeout

The proliferation of e-mail lists and rare bird alerts has made it much easier to learn about rare birds found by others. But before you chase a stakeout, do your homework. Get as much information as you can from those who have already seen the bird. Find out exactly where the bird is being seen. Does it have favorite perches? Is it being seen at a certain time of day? What behaviors does the bird display?

Make certain you can identify this bird when you see it. Study field guides, other reference books, and recordings so you can identify the bird for yourself. **DON'T RELY ON OTHERS TO IDENTIFY A RARITY FOR YOU.** Many rarities have remained misidentified for days or even weeks because the first observers got it wrong and no one else bothered to question the identification. Form your own opinions and report them. It is through the combined observations of many birders that rarities are finally, and confidently, identified.

BROADER FOCUS: Individual Species or Groups of Birds

Concentrating your birding efforts on individual species or certain groups of birds is a great way strengthen your

identification skills. If, for example, you want to become more familiar with shorebirds, take a day and just look for shorebirds. Without the distraction of trying to find every bird present, you can take the time needed to study shorebirds at length, looking for fine details on each species and making side-by-side comparisons. That's not to say that if a Ross's Gull flies over the shorebird flock you shouldn't look at it, but limiting your focus to small groups of birds is a great investment of your birding time.

Just as if you were chasing a stakeout, do your homework before you go. Learn the type of habitat you should search to find your target bird and concentrate your efforts in those areas. Once you have found your target species, observe as many details of plumage, voice, and behavior as possible so you will recognize that bird the next time you see one.

BROADEST FOCUS: Birding a Site

Birding a site, rather than looking for certain species, relies more on luck to bring you a variety of birds. But you will still benefit by planning ahead. Learn about the site before your visit, so you know what habitats and species to expect. You can then focus your birding efforts to accommodate that site.

If the site is small enough, take your time and explore the whole area. Look at each bird in a flock, and stand still long enough to allow birds to come out of hiding.

If the site is large enough that you can't cover it all, pick a variety of habitats within the site. Plan your route to take advantage of the best lighting conditions at each location. Also consider the habits of different birds when planning your route. Some species, for example, are most easily found early in the day, so habitats attractive to those species should be checked first.

No matter how well you prepare and how intense your focus, most trips will present you with the unexpected. You may find yourself abandoning all your plans to take advantage of a new opportunity. And there is something to be said for just picking up your binocular and enjoying whatever comes your way. But if you at least start each birding trip with a clear goal in mind, you will expand your bird list and your knowledge of birds, as well.

John can be contacted at: jmrake@quik.com

Making the Best Out of a Bad Situation

by Helen Hands

This year's drought throughout much of Kansas was rough on many species of birds. I think shorebirds were able to withstand it better than most. Although many marshes were dry, including much of Cheyenne Bottoms, shorebirds were able to take advantage of some water areas that normally would be too deep. These normally deepwater habitats that attracted shorebirds in summer 2002 included Pools 1A, 1B, and 1C at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area (CBWA) and Milford Reservoir.

Although the drought limited water availability at CBWA, it allowed Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks staff to attack cattail in Pool 2. Those of you who have frequented CBWA for a long time have watched cattail spread across most of CBWA since the 1970s. Fortunately, the acquisition of a large tractor and 30-foot wide disk has allowed cattail coverage to be reduced in Pools 3A, 3B, 4A, 4B, and 5 during the past seven years. Pool 2 had not been burned and disked during this time only because it could not be dried sufficiently to permit burning. Although a large opening remained in the middle of Pool 2, cattail covered about 2,000 acres or 70% of the pool by 2001. That year Pool 2 was nearly ready to burn twice, in April and September, but heavy rains northwest of CBWA resulted in enough streamflow in Blood and Deception creeks to completely reflood the pool within a week. The only silver lining to these attempts to drain Pool 2 was that the drawdowns preceding the two big

rains attracted huge numbers of shorebirds, in the neighborhood of 100,000 birds at their peak.

Finally, Pool 2 was dry enough to burn in spring 2002. About 2,000 acres of cattail were burned on May 9. Although Pool 2 was dry enough to burn, it wasn't dry enough to allow disking. Through most of the summer, we impatiently waited for disking to begin, hoping that a summer storm wouldn't reflood the pool. During that time, the cattail grew back. That meant that when portions of the pool were dry enough to disk in early July, the cattail had to be mowed and burned again before disking could begin. Fortunately, the drought continued at CBWA until rains in late September and October made Pool 2 too muddy to disk. So far, at least 1,300 acres have been disked at least once. Another 500 acres has been burned and are ready to disk as soon as the pool dries out. If this winter and spring are relatively dry, perhaps disking can continue in spring 2003. Dry and cold conditions this winter also are needed to ensure that the disked cattail actually dies because disking alone, especially one disking rather than at least two diskings, does not kill cattail. Disked cattail doesn't die unless the rhizomes dry out. So, there is a lot of work left to be done if the weather cooperates.

*Helen is a Wildlife Biologist for the
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Will Chatfield-Taylor takes the opportunity to visit with Eugene Lewis at the KOS Fall Meeting Banquet, October 4, 2002 at Meade, Kansas. Eugene, and his wife Eulalia, are long time KOS members, now retired and living in Silver City, New Mexico. Will is a high school student in the metro Kansas City area and also presented a paper at the fall meeting.

Photo by Carolyn Schwab

KOS Fall Meeting Bird List

October 5 & 6, 2002, Meade County, Kansas

One of the highlights of every fall meeting is, of course, the field trips. I'm sure that this was the first time that a lot of the participants had had the opportunity to bird in Meade County. Many of us were very pleased with the birding that we found there and look forward for the opportunity to return. A jaeger (most likely a Parasitic) was a surprise at one of the Playa Lakes. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were rather abundant during the weekend and enjoyed by all. Thank you to all the field trip leaders and to Tom Flowers for providing the compiled list of 121 species.

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| Pied-billed Grebe | Ring-billed Gull | Orange-crowned Warbler |
| Eared Grebe | Forster's Tern | Nashville Warbler |
| Great Blue Heron | Rock Dove | Yellow-rumped Warbler |
| Turkey Vulture | Eurasian Collared-Dove | Prothonotary Warbler |
| Wood Duck | Mourning Dove | Common Yellowthroat |
| Gadwall | Barn Owl | Wilson's Warbler |
| American Wigeon | Eastern Screech-Owl | Western Tanager |
| Blue-winged Teal | Great Horned Owl | Spotted Towhee |
| Northern Shoveler | Barred Owl | Chipping Sparrow |
| Northern Pintail | Common Nighthawk | Clay-colored Sparrow |
| Green-winged Teal | Chimney Swift | Field Sparrow |
| Redhead | Belted Kingfisher | Vesper Sparrow |
| Ring-necked Duck | Red-bellied Woodpecker | Lark Bunting |
| Ruddy Duck | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | Savannah Sparrow |
| Osprey | Downey Woodpecker | Song Sparrow |
| Northern Harrier | Hairy Woodpecker | Lincoln's Sparrow |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | Northern Flicker (Red and Yellow shafted) | Swamp Sparrow |
| Coopers Hawk | Eastern Phoebe | White-throated Sparrow |
| Swainson's Hawk | Scissor-tailed Flycatcher | Harris's Sparrow |
| Red-tailed Hawk | Loggerhead Shrike | White-crowned Sparrow |
| Ferruginous Hawk | Blue-headed Vireo | Dark-eyed Junco |
| American Kestrel | Blue Jay | Chestnut-collared Longspur |
| Merlin | American Crow | Northern Cardinal |
| Prairie Falcon | Horned Lark | Rose-breasted Grosbeak |
| Ring-necked Pheasant | Barn Swallow | Black-headed Grosbeak |
| Northern Bobwhite | Carolina Chickadee | Red-winged Blackbird |
| Virginia Rail | Red-breasted Nuthatch | Eastern Meadowlark |
| Sora | White-breasted Nuthatch | Western Meadowlark |
| American Coot | Brown Creeper | Yellow-headed Blackbird |
| Sandhill Crane | Rock Wren | Brewer's Blackbird |
| Killdeer | Bewick's Wren | Common Grackle |
| American Avocet | House Wren | Great-tailed Grackle |
| Greater Yellowlegs | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | Brown-headed Cowbird |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | Eastern Bluebird | House Finch |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper | Mountain Bluebird | American Goldfinch |
| Least Sandpiper | American Robin | House Sparrow |
| Baird's Sandpiper | Gray Catbird | |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | Northern Mockingbird | |
| Stilt Sandpiper | Brown Thrasher | |
| Long-billed Dowitcher | European Starling | |
| Common Snipe | American Pipit | |
| Parasitic Jaeger (Probably this species seen by Max Thompson and others) | Cedar Waxwing | |
| | Tennessee Warbler | |

The 10 Best Birds from the Fall Meeting will be published in the March 2003 newsletter.

Remember Leavenworth County in May 2003 and Southwestern College, Cowley County, in October 2003.

KANSAS SUMMER SEASON ROUNDUP

June 1, 2002 through July 31, 2002

By Lloyd Moore

Editor's notes:

Like all of us who ever try to write, Lloyd was hit with terrible writer's block as he prepared the summer report. Not to worry though, I will fill in for this edition and Lloyd will be back to his familiar self by the time the fall roundup hits the March 2003 issue.

Throughout the reporting period, much of Kansas was experiencing a continued hot and dry period. Eastern Kansas had moments of rainfall, and a few areas were down right wet. As a result of the high weather system that kept things hot and dry, not only in Kansas but to points west, we began to see the harbingers of an interesting fall birding season.

Hummingbirds started appearing in good numbers in late July leaving many birders to wonder if 2002 would equal, or surpass, recent good years of hummingbird migrations. The appearance of at least three species of hummingbirds by late July buoyed everyone's hopes of good things yet to come.

The dry weather also caused many of the lakes, reservoirs and wetlands to contract in size exposing broad expanses of mudflats. By mid-July it was becoming apparent that these mudflats were going to attract a lot of shorebirds. Hopes were again buoyed for a good fall shorebird migration.

Bald Eagle nesting success is now an accepted fact in Kansas. At least 12

nests successfully fledged young, although the numbers of fledged young was down. One can't help but wonder if the weather had something to do with this.

Thanks once again to all who have contributed their bird sightings. Keep on reporting and remember to send documentation of rare or unusual species to the KBRC. Use either the electronic form on the KOS web site <http://www.ksbirds.org> or regular mail to Dave Rintoul at Kansas State University.

*Lloyd Moore can be reached at:
ictinia@swbell.net
or at:
1250 Scott Avenue
Kansas City, KS 66105*

| <u>Species</u> | <u>Comments</u> | <u>County</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Observers</u> |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|-------------|------------------|
| <u>Brown Pelican</u> | <D> 1 at Goose Refuge, Cheney Rs. | Sedgwick | 6/16 | PJ |
| Neotropic Cormorant | 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/13 | MG |
| <u>Anhinga</u> | <D> 1 in Unit B at Marais des Cygne | Linn | 6/23 | MM,DS,GP |
| Tricolored Heron | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/01 | BG |
| | 2 adults at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/12 | MRo, DK |
| Black-crnd Night Heron | 4 in Unit F-1, Marais des Cygne | Linn | 6/16 | MC, MM |
| | 41 in playas in north-central Finney Co. | Finney | 6/30 | T&SSh |
| Yellow-crnd Night Heron | 1 adult 2 immature at Baker Wetlands, | Lawrence | | |
| | Douglas | Douglas | 6/09 | WCT |
| | 1 in unit A at MdCWA | Linn | 6/30 | MM |
| | 1 adult S of Garden City | Finney | 7/03 | T&SSh, BC |
| <u>Glossy Ibis</u> | 1 in Pool 3, Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 6/14 | SD |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| | (Seen carrying nesting material.) | | | |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/12 | MRo, DK |
| Cinnamon Teal | 1 male at Grant School Slough | Douglas | <u>6/05</u> | GP |
| Common Merganser | 1 male & 1 female at Marion Res. | Marion | <u>7/18</u> | CG |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------|-------------|-----------|
| Red-breasted Merganser | 1 seen on <u>county road</u> | Rush | <u>6/06</u> | SS |
| Osprey | 1 in Unit A, Marais des Cygne WA | Linn | <u>6/16</u> | MC, MM |
| Mississippi Kite | 1 at Ft Riley | Geary | 6/06 | JK |
| | (Possibly nesting.) 2 near 4 th & Wisconsin, Lawrence | Douglas | 7/12 | PF |
| Bald Eagle | There were 12 successful nests that we know of, which produced only 19 chicks. For some odd reason or another, this year was predominated by 1-egg nests. Locations and output are as follows, with asterisks denoting those eaglets that we were able to band. <i>Dan Mulhern, USF&W</i> | | | |
| | Clinton Lake #1 | 2* | | |
| | Clinton Lake #2 | 1* | | |
| | Hillsdale Lake #1 | 2 | | |
| | Hillsdale Lake #2 | 2 | | |
| | Hodgeman Co. | 1 | | |
| | Perry Lake | 1* | | |
| | Kansas River #1 | 1 | | |
| | Kansas River #2 | 1 | | |
| | Glen Elder Res. | 2 | | |
| | Osage Co . | 3 | | |
| | Neosho Co . | 1* | | |
| | Tuttle Creek . | 2* | | |
| Northern Harrier | 1 on Beloit BBS Route | Mitchell | 6/08 | PW |
| Cooper's Hawk | 1 on Jamestown BBS Route | Mitchell | 6/09 | PW |
| | 1 at the Prairie Center, Olathe | Johnson | 6/25 | WCT |
| | 2 NW of Larned | Pawnee | 7/03 | SS |
| Broad-winged Hawk | 1 imm. & 1 adult at Rice Woods | Douglas | 6/25 | BB |
| Peregrine Falcon | 1 adult in downtown Topeka | Shawnee | 7/7,9,18 | JB |
| | 1 juvenile at a playa lake | Finney | 7/19 | T&SSh |
| <u>Black Rail</u> | 1 calling at SW corner of the wildlife loop at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Virginia Rail | 1 in Unit B, Marais des Cygne | Linn | 6/16 | MC, MM |
| <u>Piping Plover</u> | On a sandbar almost straight south of St Marys, a single Piping Plover with 4 eggs hatched last week. 7/12 DM | | | |
| | On a sandbar at the first large bend downstream from the Belvue-to-Paxico bridge, the following: 2 Piping Plover nests, 1 with at least 1 chick already hatched, and unknown # of eggs remaining; the 2nd with 2 eggs. | | | |
| | | Pottawatomie | 7/12 | DM |
| | 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/13 | MG |
| Black-necked Stilt | Pair with 2 chicks S of Garden City | Finney | 7/03 | T&SSh, BC |
| American Avocet | 21 in playas in NC Finney Co. | Finney | 6/30 | T&SSh |
| | Pair with 1 chick S of Garden City | Finney | 7/03 | T&SSh, BC |
| Greater Yellowlegs | 1 in playas in NC Finney Co. | Finney | 6/30 | T&SSh |
| | 3 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | <u>6/14</u> | SD |
| | 20 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Solitary Sandpiper | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------|------|--------------|
| Willet | 1 at Tuttle Creek Rs. | Riley | 7/03 | TC |
| | 2 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| | 3 at Wilson Lake, Otoe Park (Also 1 seen on 7/04 at Wilson State Park.) | Russell | 7/06 | MR |
| | 2 on Kansas River near Ogden | Riley | 7/02 | DM |
| Long-billed Curlew | 5 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/29 | DV,ST,WC,DKi |
| Hudsonian Godwit | 3 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| Marbled Godwit | 2 at Tuttle Creek Rs. | Riley | 7/03 | TC |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| | 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/29 | DV,ST,WC,DKi |
| | 1 at Clinton Lake | Douglas | 7/28 | GP, MM |
| Ruddy Turnstone | 1 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/23 | HH |
| | 3 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/28 | ME |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper | 50 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Western Sandpiper | 6 at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| <u>White-rumped Sandpiper</u> <D> | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/12 | MRo, DK, MT |
| Dunlin | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/29 | DV,ST,WC,DKi |
| <u>Curlew Sandpiper</u> <D> | 1 alternate plumaged adult at QNWR | Stafford | 6/12 | MRo, DK, MT |
| Stilt Sandpiper | 3 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | 5 at Colwich sod farms | Sedgwick | 7/28 | PJ |
| Long-billed Dowitcher | 1 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 6/14 | SD |
| | 2 at Quivira NWR | Stafford | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Wilson's Phalarope | 11 in playas in NC Finney Co. | Finney | 6/30 | T&SSh |
| Caspian Tern | 1 immature at Wilson Lake | Russell | 7/24 | MR |
| | 1 at Cheney Res. | Reno | 7/28 | PJ |
| Forester's Tern | 3 adult, 1 juv. At Wilson Lake | Russell | 6/27 | MR |
| Least Tern | 1 seen in Wichita | Sedgwick | 6/10 | LM |
| | 1 at Stockdale Area, Tuttle Creek | Riley | 6/09 | MR, TC |
| | 5 seen nesting, for the 3 rd year in a row in an area under development in NW Wichita. | Sedgwick | 6/30 | PJ, KG |
| | (6 adults, 1 juvenile, 2 chicks seen on 7/04 by PJ and DA). | | | |
| | 1 at Kirwin Reservoir | Phillips | 7/13 | SR |
| | 8 nests on sandbar in Kansas River downstream of the Belvue-to-Paxico bridge. | | | |
| | One nest with 3 hatchlings and 7 nests with 1-3 eggs each. On an island 0.75 mile upstream from the mouth of the Vermillion River (below Wamego) the following: 4 pairs of Least Terns just initiating a new colony (after being predated at the St Marys site previously), with at least 1 nest with ? eggs, and the other 3 pairs either with new nests or just making nest scrapes. Both sites in Pottawatomie Co. as of 12 July, Dan Mulhern, USF&W | | | |
| | 5 plus 3 hatchlings in NW Wichita | Sedgwick | 7/28 | PJ |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Eurasian Collared-Dove | 3 in Garfield | Pawnee | 6/15 | SS |
| | Pair nest building in Larned | Pawnee | 6/15 | SS |
| | Pair building nest in Caney | Montgomery | 6/18 | LD |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------|-------------|---------|
| Eurasian Collared-Dove | Nesting past 2-3 years at Manhattan residence. | | | |
| | | Riley | 6/28 | fide TC |
| | 1 heard calling in Blue Rapids | Marshall | 6/29 | TP |
| | 1 in Wakeeney | Trego | 7/03 | SS |
| | 2 in Healy | Lane | 7/09 | MR |
| | 1 in Hanston | Hodgeman | 7/22 | SS |
| | 1 pair nesting at Janzen residence | Sedgwick | 7/23 | PJ |
| | 3 at a residence in Emporia | Lyon | 7/24 | RA |
| White-winged Dove | 1 at residence in Manhattan | Riley | 7/03 | SK |
| Black-billed Cuckoo | 1 at Wilson State Park | Russell | 6/01 | MR |
| 'Archilochus' | 2 unknown age/sex at Satanta | Haskell | 7/29 | NC |
| <u>Calliope Hummingbird</u> | 1 adult male at Larned | Pawnee | 7/19 | DKa |
| | 1 adult male at Shane residence | Finney | 7/28 | T&SSh |
| | 1 adult female at Shane residence | Finney | 7/28 | T&SSh |
| | 1 immature at Schartz residence | Pawnee | 7/31 | OS |
| Broad-tailed Hummingbird | 1 female at Shane residence | Finney | 7/27 | T&SSh |
| | 3 immature at Shanes | Finney | 7/31 | T&SSh |
| Rufous Hummingbird | 1 adult female at Shane residence | Finney | 7/14 | T&SSh |
| | 1 imm. male at Kazmaier residence | Pawnee | 7/29 | SS |
| | 1 adult male at Shanes | Finney | 7/31 | T&SSh |
| 'Selasphorus' | 1 imm/female type at Kazmaiers | Pawnee | 7/29 | SS |
| | 1 imm/female type at Kazmaiers | Pawnee | 7/30 | SS |
| | 2 unknown age/sex at Satanta | Haskell | 7/29 | NC |
| Least Flycatcher | 2 banded at Ft. Riley | Riley | 6/04 | DR |
| | 2 adult females at Ft. Riley | Riley | 7/30 | DR |
| <u>Vermilion Flycatcher</u> | 1 male near K-27 picnic area CNG | Morton | 6/21 | JN |
| Bell's Vireo | 6 heard singing, Wilson Lake | Russell | 6/27 | MR |
| | 33 heard singing, Scott S.P. | Scott | 6/29 | T&SSh |
| <u>Common Raven</u> | 1 heard calling along Big Creek near FHSU in Hays | Ellis | 7/20 | JS |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch | 1 female at Wichita residence | Sedgwick | 6/13 | H&SG |
| Marsh Wren | 2 singing at Cheyenne Bottoms | Barton | 7/04 | PJ, DA |
| Swainson's Thrush | 1 at Burcham Park, Lawrence | Douglas | 6/01 | BA |
| Yellow-throated Warbler | 1 <u>recently fledged young</u> at MdCWA | <u>Linn</u> | 7/29 | MM |
| <u>Cerulean Warbler</u> | 1 male S of Unit G at MdCWA | Linn | <u>6/30</u> | MM |
| | <i>(Bird was found again on 7/04 & 7/14 was acting territorial and could possibly be nesting. MM and GP.)</i> | | | |
| Ovenbird | Pair and 1 singing male, east side of LaCygne Lake. | Linn | 6/24 | BB |
| Spotted Towhee | 1 singing at Wilson State Park | <u>Russell</u> | <u>6/13</u> | MR |
| | ? near Cable residence | <u>Riley</u> | <u>6/14</u> | TC |
| Black-headed Grosbeak | Pair N. of Edson | Sherman | 6/11 | MR |
| | 2 at Scott Lake | Scott | 7/09 | MR |

Underlined dates, locations or comments indicate unusual, late or early sightings.

Underlined species indicates unusual species.

Underlined species in bold indicate species with no records or fewer than 10 records for Kansas.

<D>indicates that documentation was submitted to KBRC (Kansas Bird Records Committee).

Abbreviations: Cimarron National Grassland (CNG), Kansas Bird Records Committee (KBRC), Nelson Environmental Study Area (NESA), Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (QNWR), Cheyenne Bottoms (CB), Perry Wildlife Area (PWA), Marais des Cygne W. A. (MdcWA), Ft. Hays State University (FHSU)

OBSERVERS: Bob Antonio, David Arbour, Roger Applegate, Bill Busby, Joanne Brier, Ted Cable, Mark Corder, Barbara Campbell, Wally Champeny, Norma Conover, Stephen Dinsmore, Lanny Deering, Marsha Ebaugh, Patty Field, Bob Gress, Harry & Sharron Gregory (H&SG), Kevin Groeneweg, Matt Gearheart, Chet Gresham, Helen Hands, Jeff Keating, Steve Kramer, Dan Kluza, Don Kazmaier (DKa), Dan Kilby (DKi), Linda Mallonee, Mick McHugh, Dan Mulhern, John Northrup, Dan Mulhern, Galen Pittman, Tom Parker, Mike Rader, Dave Rintoul, Shannon Rothchild, Mark Robbins (MRo), Scott Seltman, David Seibel, Tom & Sara Shane (T&SSh), John Schukman, Omar Schartz, Will Chatfield Taylor, Max Thompson, Sandra Tholen, Don Vannoy, Phil Wedge

Why I Bird

A recent discussion on the Internet Kansas Bird Discussion List addressed the topic of why all of us go birdwatching. We all have different reasons why we birdwatch, and some of us have many reasons. Pete Janzen's response came in the form of a poem (with apologies given to Tom T. Hall and recent television commercials.)

A little explanation is probably in order. Pete had spent a September weekend in Morton county, along with about 30 other KOS members. Pete was hoping that the recent invasion of western jays would bring him a Pinyon Jay which would be species number 400 for his Kansas life list. Pete, along with most of the rest of us, added western jays to our Kansas lists and hence the following poem, reprinted with Pete's permission!

(Editor's Note - In all journalistic integrity it must be mentioned that the second to the last line of the last paragraph, the line about telescopes, is slightly different than the original poem that Pete posted. Pete made a revision to make the verse slightly more politically correct.)

I Like

by Pete Janzen

I like
birding with my friends
observing seasonal trends
migrants riding north winds
and Pinyons...

I like
warblers with wingbars
shorebirds on sandbars
lifers seen from cars
and Pinyons....

I like
Patti birding hikes
migrant numbers that spike
Mississippi Kites
and Pinyons.....

I like
sparrows lurking in grass
Merlins stepping on the gas
telescopes with ED glass
and oooohhhh (hehehe) those Pinyons....

AND I LIKE YOU TOO!!!!!!!!!!

2002 - 2003 Christmas Bird Count Season

Ah, the Christmas Bird Count Season (or early winter bird counts or holiday bird counts... whatever you choose to call them.) Those wonderful days when you head out into bitter cold, wet slushy snow, or unseasonable heat waves, all in the interest of seeing how many bird species and individuals you and your colleagues can find in a circle 15 miles in diameter. You may find a wonderful rarity, you may freeze your binoculars off. Is this a great time of year or what?! Following is a list of the counts that have been posted on the Kansas Bird Discussion List (KSBIRD-L) or reported directly to the editor. If you have any questions regarding the details of a particular count, please contact the count compiler directly. While not all of the Kansas counts are submitted to the National Audubon Society (NAS), most all are published in *The Bulletin*. NAS has “permanently” set the count dates as December 14th through January 5th, inclusive. The dates that are acceptable for inclusion in *The Bulletin* are slightly different. All of the following count information, as well as last minute changes, will be posted on the KOS web site; <http://ksbirds.org>

Saturday, December 14

Dodge City - Joleen Fromm, 620-227-6342, meet at Inn Pancake House at 7 AM.

Hays - Greg Farley, gfarley@fhsu.edu, 785-628-5965

Lakin - Leonard Rich, 620-275-5192

Lawrence - Galen Pittman, gpittman@ku.edu, 785-842-7105

Parsons - Paul Milks, plmilks@terraworld.net, 620-417-3427

Topeka - Gary Haden, 785-273-5598

Wichita - Pete Janzen, prarybrd@southwind.net, 316-832-0182

Wilson Lake - Mike Rader, mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595

Sunday, December 15

Canyonlands (SE Logan County) - Tom Shane, 620-275-4616, shane@pld.com

Emporia - Jean Schulenberg, schulenj@emporia.edu, 620-341-5896

Oskaloosa-Perry - Bunnie Watkins, ranger_rabbit@sunflower.com, 785-749-3581

Waconda Lake - Mike Rader, mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595

Winfield - Max Thompson, maxt@cox.net, 620-221-1856

Wednesday, December 18

Quivira NWR - Mike Rader, mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595

Thursday, December 19

Slate Creek - Gene Young, youngg6264@yahoo.com, 620-441-5331

Friday, December 20

Cheyenne Bottoms - Helen Hands, 620-793-3066, helenh@wp.state.ks.us, meet at office at 8 AM.

Jetmore - Joyce Davis, 620-225-1217, meet at Wendy's, 2409 Central in Dodge City at 7 AM.

Saturday, December 21

Arkansas City - Gene Young, youngg6264@yahoo.com, 620-441-5331

Camp Naish - Stan Roth, sd Roth@ku.edu, 785-843-4764

John Redmond - Bob Culbertson, bobc@wp.state.ks.us

Leavenworth/Atchison - John Schukman, 913-717-5141, schuksaya@aol.com

Manhattan - Dave Rintoul, drintoul@ksu.edu, 785-532-6663

Salina - Harold Lear, 785-823-2366, h.v.lear@att.net, meet at Lakewood Discover Center at 7 AM, back at LDC for lunch and Jim's Fried Chicken on Broadway for tally and dinner at 6 PM.

Scott Lake - Sara Shane, 620-275-4616, shane@pld.com

Sunday, December 22

Bonner Springs/Lansing - Galen Pittman, gpittman@ku.edu, 785-842-7105

Wakefield (upper Milford Lake) - Chuck Otte, 785-238-8800, cotte@oznet.ksu.edu, meet at the Wakefield Restaurant at 7:30 AM

Monday, December 23

Olsburg - Cindy Jeffrey, 785-468-3587, cinraney@ksu.edu

Saturday, December 28

Baldwin - Roger Boyd, roger.boyd@bakeru.edu, meet at the Sante Fe Depot in Baldwin at 7:15 AM

Blue Rapids - Tom Parker, 785-363-7228, tlparker@flinthills.com, Meet in front of the community center on the town square at 7 a.m. Groups will meet at the Blue Valley Café for lunch, and an informal potluck will be held afterward at the community center.

Cimarron National Grasslands, Elkhart - Sebastian Patti, 773-248-0570, sebastianpatti@hotmail.com, meet at the Elkhart Cemetery at 8:30 AM

El Dorado - Bill Langley, blangley@butlercc.edu

Kirwin NWR - Erich Gilbert, 785-543-6673

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Sunday, December 29

Junction City - Chuck Otte, 785-238-8800, cotte@oznet.ksu.edu, meet at Sapp Brothers Truckstop, US77 at I-70, at 7:30 AM

Kenton (Black Mesa), Oklahoma - Sebastian Patti, 773-248-0570, sebastianpatti@hotmail.com, meet at the Townsman Motel Restaurant in Boise City at 7 AM or the Regnier Ranchhouse at 8:30 AM

Linn County - Roger Boyd, roger.boyd@bakeru.edu, meet at the Texaco Truck Stop just south of the US69 LaCygne interchange at 7:15AM.

Monday, December 30

Liberal - Sebastian Patti, 773-248-0570, sebastianpatti@hotmail.com, contact Sebastian for details.

Wednesday, January 1, 2003

SE Kansas Minedland, Cherokee County - Steve Ford, 620-235-4732, sford@pittstate.edu Meet at the junction of highways 102 & 7 at 7 AM, Express Lane Convenience Store.

Ulysses - Jeff Trotman, jtkb@PLD.COM

Thursday, January 2

Ingalls/Cimarron - Debra Bolton

Friday, January 3

Old Garfield County - Barbara Campbell, bcamp@ODSGC.NET, 620-275-5430

Saturday, January 4

Doniphan - Mike Stewart, 913-651-2565, mstewart@lvnworth.com

Garden City - Marie Osterbuhr, 620-276-8145, m.osterbuhr@ALLTEL.NET

Red Hills - Pete Janzen, prarybrd@southwind.net

Sunday, January 5

St. Francis - Dan LaShelle, 785-354-1270

Monday, January 6

Atwood - Dan LaShelle, 785-354-1270

Saturday, January 11

Blackwolf - Mike Rader, mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595

Sawyer - Ken Brunson, kenb@wp.state.ks.us, 620-672-7289

Syracuse - Art Nonhof, anonhof@pld.com, 620-277-2087

Sunday, January 12

Kanopolis Lake - Mike Rader,

mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595

Sandhills/Finney County - Mike Ramsey, ramsey.hmbr@sbcglobal.net

Pending (contact compiler for details)

Webster Reservoir - Mike Rader,

mike_rader@hotmail.com, 785-658-2595 (this one will either be 12/22 or 1/5/03)

Cedar Bluffs Reservoir - Scott Seltman, sselt@gbta.net, contact Scott if you are interested.

*Liberal Lagoons
Vacation Paradise!
Sept. 22, 2002*



Who else but us birdwatchers take the time to get together in groups and visit cemeteries, landfills and sewage lagoons? This group of hardy birders left Elkhart, and classic Morton County birding, early in the morning in pursuit of a Gull-billed Tern. While the tern wasn't found, they did take time for this "birders vacation" photo. Left to right the participants are: Pete Janzen, Kerrie Kirkpatrick, Chet Gresham, Cheryl Miller, Sebastian Patti, Kevin Groeneweg and Lisa Edwards.

Photo by Carolyn Schwab

KOS Fall Board Meeting

October 5, 2002

Meade, Kansas

Attendance: Chuck Otte
 Cal Cink
 Greg Farley

 John Schukman
 Bill Busby

Chairman, John Schukman, called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. The five voting members present were one short of a quorum. Consequently, it was decided to vote on board issues, record the votes, and then to seek input and votes from remaining members via email. The minutes from the spring board meeting were reviewed. Bill Busby asked the board to read over his interpretation of board decisions on the student awards policy and comments from David Seibel. The board was satisfied with the minutes and approved them.

Finance Committee Report: Dan Larson was not present but had submitted written comments and a checking assets report. The checking account had a negative balance of \$1739.78 even after a \$2,500 transfer from the trust fund. John stated that another transfer from the trust account to checking will be made to cover the shortfall. The trust fund stood at \$107,013 at the end of June.

KBRC Report: Dave Rintoul was not present but had forwarded recommended changes in the bylaws to John for the board to review. After brief discussion, a move was made to approve the suggested changes. The motion was seconded and there were five votes for approval.

Bulletin Editor's Report: Cal Cink reported that he has received enough material for the fall issue of the bulletin. He is accepting material for next year.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Chuck Otte requests that CBC contacts send him dates for this year's Christmas Bird Counts.

Vice-President's Report: Gene Young was not present.

Treasurer's Report: Dan Larson was not present but sent in a report. See Finance Committee report above.

Membership Report: Mike Stewart was not present, but has reported to John that producing a new membership directory is scheduled for 2003. Look for a note in the newsletter next year on this subject.

Business Manager's Report: Dave Williams also was not present.

New/Other Business

Future Meetings:

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Spring 2003 | Leavenworth County |
| Fall 2003 | Southwestern College, Cowley County |
| Spring 2004 | Washington County |
| Fall 2004 | Baker University, Douglas County |

Membership Brochures & Directory: see Membership Report

Dingus Tract: John Schukman has a new sign ready and is planning a trip on October 13th or 20th to post the new sign.

Student Research Awards: Funds available for student research awards consisted of \$3,100 from the 2001 budget, income from recent silent actions, and funds raised by Tom Shane. Student awards funds continue to be requested

and distributed. However, the desire for establishing a more transparent and consistent student awards process was discussed. The board suggested a three-person student research awards committee be formed to review current policy and suggest any needed modifications. John or Gene will set up a committee with a goal of having recommendations ready by summer 2003. It was agreed that one qualifying criterion be that both the student and his/her faculty sponsor be KOS members.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

General Business Meeting

President John Schukman called the general business meeting to order at 4:50 pm.

The following slate of new officers and directors was forwarded to the membership:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Vice-president | Tom Shane |
| Board Member | Kerrie Kirkpatrick |
| Board Member | Cheryl Miller |

It was moved that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for the slate presented. The motion was seconded and carried. (Board members who will continue to serve for a second year are David Seibel and Marvin Kuehn. Board members whose term have now expired are Debarah Arnett and Chet Gresham.)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Busby
Corresponding Secretary

Addendum to Fall Board Meeting

Because a quorum was not present at the Fall Board Meeting in Meade, votes on the two motions made and seconded were solicited by email from the remaining board members. Results are as follows:

Motion to accept the minutes from the winter 2002 minutes: Passed.

Motion to accept KBRC bylaw changes: Passed.

Bill Busby
Corresponding Secretary
23 October 2002

Thank You Fall Meeting Committee!!

Wow! What else can we say? Tom, Audrey and Robin Flowers, along with the Meade County Economic Development Committee put on a wonderful fall meeting! Somewhere around 70 KOS members were registered and showed up to fill the motels, noticeably swell the population, enjoy some great hospitality and good food and have some very memorable birdwatching. As you can imagine, there aren't a lot of KOS members in Meade, so Tom had to rely on friends and family in Meade as well as KOS members from "nearby" communities. I think everyone had a very enjoyable time and it was really fun to have Dr. Jim Rising with us for most of the weekend and to speak at the banquet on Saturday night. Thanks again to the entire Fall Meeting committee! Now on to Leavenworth in the spring and Southwestern College next fall.

Abstracts of Papers Presented at the 2002 Fall KOS Meetings Meade, Kansas October 5, 2002

An experimental study of female condition and reproductive success in Tree Swallows. *Jacqueline K. Nooker (1), Peter O. Dunn, and Linda A. Whittingham*
Affiliations: Department of Biological Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; (1) current address - Division of Biology, Kansas State University.

Female condition influences reproductive investment and success but may influence nest building, egg laying, incubation, and nestling feeding stages differentially. To determine which stages of reproduction are vulnerable to poor female condition, I experimentally reduced the condition of female Tree Swallows by clipping flight feathers one to two weeks before egg laying. Experimental females were in poorer condition at the end of egg laying and during nestling feeding than control females. Females in good condition produced offspring in good condition and a greater proportion of males in their broods regardless of experimental treatment. Clipped females built smaller nests, laid later, laid smaller clutches, and laid smaller eggs than controls. Hatching and brood success and offspring morphometrics did not vary between treatments. This suggests that 1) female condition affects nest building and egg laying to a greater extent than nestling feeding, 2) males may minimize the differences between poor and good condition females during nestling feeding, or 3) some combination of the two.

The effects of sex and age on the survival of Kentish Plovers breeding in southern Turkey. *Brett K. Sandercock**, *Division of Biology, Kansas State University and Tan s Sz, kely, Department of Biology and Biochemistry, University of Bath.*

The life histories of shorebirds are characterized by low productivity, high rates of nest and brood failure and high adult survival. Robust estimates of survival are essential for understanding the population dynamics of shorebirds and other long-lived vertebrates. In this study we use re-sighting data and mark-recapture statistics to estimate apparent survival for a population of Kentish Plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*) breeding in Turkey. Estimates of survival for Kentish Plovers and the conspecific Snowy Plover (*C. a. nivosus*) are of interest because both subspecies are of

conservation concern, and have a peculiar mating system. A total of 2077 plovers were captured and banded over a 5-year period. The proportion of juveniles returning was 0.04, with no difference between males and females. Apparent survival was low among juveniles that survived 0-28 days (0.09) and somewhat higher among young that survived until fledging (0.13). Most juveniles started breeding as yearlings. Apparent survival rates of adult plovers were 0.60-0.64, and males had higher re-sighting rates than females (0.84 vs. 0.74). The lack of sexual differences in survival is puzzling and difficult to reconcile with a male biased sex ration among adults. Overall, our estimates are consistent with return rates reported for other small-bodied *Charadrius* plovers.

Riparian bird surveys on the Marais des Cygnes River. *Bill Busby, Kansas Biological Survey, Lawrence, KS.*

Population data on breeding birds in riparian habitat is underrepresented on the North American Breeding Bird Survey due to limited road access to stream-side habitats. In order to obtain better information on riparian forest birds in eastern Kansas, a canoe survey on the Marais des Cygnes River was established in 1997. A 16-mile reach of the river encompassing the Marais des Cygnes State Wildlife Area and National Wildlife Refuge in Linn County has been surveyed annually in late spring for 28 species. The most frequently recorded species, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Acadian Flycatcher, Northern Parula, and Prothonotary Warbler are detected at average rates of 2-3 singing males per river-mile. Canoe surveys of this type appear to be an effective means of sampling species-rich riverine habitats.

Evidence for density-dependent habitat selection by Brown-headed Cowbirds in tallgrass prairie landscapes. *William E. Jensen and Jack F. Cully, Jr., Kansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Division of Biology, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS.*

Variation in population density may influence intraspecific competition for habitat space and thus the local dispersion of individuals among habitats.

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Density-dependent habitat selection models may help explain geographic variation in apparent host preference of the brood-parasitic Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) among vegetative habitats. We present a pattern that resembles predictions of such models of cowbird dispersion among host habitats along a natural geographic gradient in cowbird abundance within the Flint Hills tallgrass prairie region. Particularly, we were interested in the variability of cowbird occurrence, and parasitism of Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) nests, among wooded edge habitats, experimental perch habitats, and open grasslands (predicted as being primary, secondary, and tertiary habitats respectively) in relation to variation in local cowbird abundance across eight study sites. Local cowbird abundance and especially parasitism of Dickcissel nests, varied greatly among a latitudinal gradient, both being lowest on the three southeastern-most study sites. Models of female cowbird relative abundance, parasitism rate, and number of cowbird eggs per parasitized nest all indicated significant interactions of habitat plot with local female cowbird abundance. In all models, female cowbird occurrence and parasitism were higher in wooded edge habitat than the other two habitat plots at low local cowbird abundance. However, cowbird abundance and parasitism equalized across all habitats with a slight increase in local cowbird abundance. Our evidence for reduced cowbird egg success in multiply parasitized nests as a mechanism for such density-dependent habitat selection was weak, but is also suggested by previous studies. Subtle landscape features or sub-specific geographic variation in cowbirds may also help explain the extreme geographic threshold in parasitism rates of grassland hosts in the Flint Hills. Cowbird removal programs would provide an additional experimental test of density dependence in cowbird host selection among habitats.

Experimental test of host song in attracting the brood parasitic Brown-headed Cowbird. *William Jensen (1), Drew Miller (1), Jarrod Bowers (1), and Maureen Leonard (2).* (1) Div. of Biol., Kansas State Univ., Manhattan, KS (2) Dept. of Biol. Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

Brood parasites appear to use behavioral cues of their host in order to locate host nests. Song of male host parents near nests has been positively correlated with brood parasitism frequency by the Brown-headed cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). We attempted an experimental test of the effect of male Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*) song in attracting Brown-headed Cowbirds at Konza Prairie Biological Station (KPBS). Audio playbacks of continuous Bell's Vireo song were

randomly allocated to single shrub islands (nesting habitat of Bell's Vireos on KPBS) within shrub island pairs for 5-hour trials, twice weekly. Response variables recorded were (1) the incidences that cowbirds and vireos approached, alighted on, and entered each shrub treatment during thirty-minute monitoring periods during each trial, and (2) parasitism of artificial vireo nests during three to four day exposure periods associated with each trial. There was no apparent effect of vireo song playback in attracting either female or male cowbirds to playback-shrub over control-shrub units. However, male Bell's Vireos approached and entered playback-shrub treatments significantly more often than control shrubs. None of the 46 artificial nests during nest trials were parasitized by cowbirds. Although artificial vireo eggs were found missing from some artificial nests, those losses could not be attributed to cowbird egg removal. Various aspects of our experimental procedure may have been insufficient in attracting female cowbirds. The effect of host song on brood parasitism in birds deserves further study.

The Long-eared Owl breeding on the Great Plains. *Thomas G. Shane and Sara J. Shane, Garden City, Kansas*

On 25 May 2002 we located an adult and two fledgling Long-eared Owls at Scott State Game Management Area in north central Scott County, Kansas. The location was in a heavily wooded side draw of Timber Canyon. The owls flew into a wooded area that we had just inspected for a nest, the adult giving a "double bark" call and one young bird giving a "weee" call. This was the first time the species was recorded nesting in Scott County and is the fifth county on or west of the 100th Meridian with a breeding record.

Chimney Swift population declines: strategies for conservation and management. *Calvin L. Cink, Biology Department, Baker University, Baldwin City, Kansas 66606.*

The Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), which is closely associated with humans in cities and rural areas, is as recognizable a component of the eastern North American avifauna as any species. The multitude of nesting cavities provided by the chimneys of European settlers allowed its populations to increase dramatically over what was previously a thinly distributed breeding range. Over the past 30 years however, their populations have been declining (2% annually). Long-term trends suggest that this may be due to loss of existing nesting sites, and usable chimneys produced in new home

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construction. Education of the public on the biology of swifts and construction of artificial chimneys may be effective conservation and management tools to reduce these population declines.

Agonistic Interactions, Court Size and Location, and Mating Success of Hybrid Prairie- Chickens.

Matthew R. Bain and Greg H. Farley, Department of Biological Sciences, Fort Hays State University.

Hybrid Prairie-Chicken have been documented displaying on Lesser and Greater Prairie-Chicken leks in western Kansas. During 2002 breeding season, we examined behavioral interactions between male hybrids and members of their parental species. Although hybrids had high rates of agonistic encounters and were successful in defending relatively large and centrally located display courts, they failed to copulate. Mating success of males hybrids appears to be limited by female choice rather than male competition, thereby preventing backcrossing with either parental form.

Falcon Quest *Robin Flowers, Meade, Kansas, Karen Steenhofi United States Geological Survey (USGS), Boise, Idaho and Thomas Flowers, Meade, Kansas.*

A Prairie Falcon banded in Idaho and equipped with a satellite transmitter died in Gove County, Kansas. Serving as USGS volunteers, our family used equipment provided by USGS to recover the transmitter. An attempt was made to recover a second transmitter in Wheeler County, Texas but was not successful. Satellite transmitters are providing new insights into the annual migrations of this species. Recovery of dead birds may give researchers insight into possible environmental dangers to the falcons.

West Nile Virus, a Kansas update. *Chuck Otte, Junction City, Kansas*

An update on the occurrence and spread of West Nile Virus in Kansas.

Occurrence probability of forest birds from the Missouri Ozarks to the Kansas Tallgrass Prairie.

John M. Schukman, Leavenworth, Kansas

For conservation and management purposes, forest birds of eastern North America are classified into groups or guilds by habitat preference (interior specialists, interior-edge, generalists, or edge) and sensitivity to habitat fragmentation (low, moderate or high). Classifications and results vary among some of these researchers, and can be controversial, thus confounding

habitat conservation efforts. Breeding bird atlases can provide useful information about guild responses on a continuum from the most sensitive to the most resilient groups and about geographic variation in guild composition. In this paper, using breeding bird atlas data from Kansas and Missouri, I compare occurrence relationships of 20 forest birds along a forest-prairie gradient at a regional (biogeographic) scale. I used logistic regression, a method suggested for atlas or incidence data to calculate occurrence probability from the Missouri Ozarks to the Kansas Tallgrass Prairie. A positive and significant relationship between forest cover and occurrence was found for 18 of the 20 species. Variations in species' response to habitat changes are discussed.

The Effects of Cold Weather on the Fall Migration of *Mergus merganser*. *Chatfield-Taylor, Will, Matt and Mark*

The average temperature in November in the states of Nebraska and North Dakota were recorded. A statistical correlation test was then performed on this information and the number of Common Merganser found on Clinton Reservoir, Lawrence, Kansas in December and January. The purpose was to determine if in years with colder weather, more mergansers would migrate south than in years with warmer weather. The results showed a significance level between .05 and .01 This means that there was a significant level high enough to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis being that there was no correlation.

Kansas County Bird Checklist Project Update

While not an official KOS project, this activity wouldn't be possible without the input of many KOS members. In a nutshell your newsletter editor, Chuck Otte, started a project about two years ago to pull together as many resources as possible and create individual bird checklists for all 105 Kansas counties. This goal was accomplished late in September of 2001. Since then additional records have been submitted, sought out, researched, compiled and lists updated. The most current copy of each list is available in Adobe Acrobat PDF format at <http://ksbirds.org>. At this writing, there is a total of 24,244 species listings. 19 counties have 300 or more species, 51 have 200 - 299 and 35 counties have less than 200 species on their list. Please contact Chuck for more information!

Is That A New Species?

The splitters are at it again! The 43rd supplement to the North American Ornithologists Union (the august body who decides what constitutes a species and what it will be named) Check-list of North American Birds was released this summer. Contained therein was one change that will impact a Kansas species and another change of interest to many Kansas birders. While the changes will need to be acted upon by our own Kansas Bird Records Committee, we want to make you aware of what has happened at the AOU level.

The new and old world Common Snipe have been split. The snipe found in Kansas, *Gallinago delicata* is now called the Wilson's Snipe, while the old world species, *Gallinago gallinago*, retains the name Common Snipe.

Of interest to Kansas birders who have spent time in Texas birding, is the split of the Tufted Titmouse. The west and south Texas form is returned to full species status and is again known as the Black-crested Titmouse, *Baeolophus atricristatus*. There is no change to the Tufted Titmouse that we have in Kansas.

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Photo Gallery

November was a "loony" month in Kansas with no less than four species of loons present in the state at the same time. With the improvements in both optics and digital cameras, a whole new realm of bird photography, "digiscoping", is evolving. Kansas birders are not about to be left out of this exciting new area. Wichita KOS member Kevin Groeneweg has been kind enough to share some of his loon photos with us and granted permission for them to be used. This is also a new realm for the *Horned Lark* and it may take a run or two to determine the best technique for bringing bird photos to you. Please be patient and those who are enjoying digiscoping, feel free to share your photos with the rest of KOS!



Yellow-billed Loon photographed November 16, 2002 at Clark State Fishing Lake.
Photo by Kevin Groeneweg



Red-throated Loon photographed November 29, 2002 at Winfield City Lake.
Photo by Kevin Groeneweg

Remember KOS.... If you would like to help the Kansas Ornithological Society's future growth consider leaving a memorial trust for the Society or including the KOS in your will. If you would like more information feel free to contact any of the Board Members.